

8-5-1895

Letter from Harriet Prescott Spofford,
Newburyport, Massachusetts, to Anne Whitney,
Shelburne, New Hampshire, 1895 August 5

Harriet Prescott Spofford

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J^r /
or,

Miss Anne Whitney,
The Knoll,

Shelburne

New Hampshire.





which were dreary, — and it was not
easy to keep the balance of one's
thought, — in ways which it is easier
to tell of than to write of. Death
is always a little Samaritan, — or
I should say, it often is. I have
seen people die when the Spirit seemed
to soar out of them, — but when one
is like an automaton knocked about
convulsively for hours I know you
lose sight of the possibility of spirit.
So altogether it has not been a
lovely summer, — but I am all
right now, — I have found my
place in the universe again, &
to speak, — for little place,

Newburyport, Mass.
Aug. 5th [1895]

My Dearest One:

I am so glad to
hear from you, & know you are in
the land of the living, — at least
not that, but well & in the mountains.
And I am so sorry that I am not
going to be able to go to you. I had
half meant to write & tell you
that my plans had been changed for
me, — but then thought I had best
wait till the King ^(Queen) threw his hands
in. Well, you can't believe
how great a disappointment it is

to me, - for it is the very chiefest
pleasure of the whole world to me.
It is no use to enumerate the
reasons, they are too many! Friends
have & to be here through all
August & September, - as Dr. Aunt
of 80, who has signified her good
pleasure to come, Fanny's estate
to be settled, & I needed at
hand, & the Dentist, most of all
in weight, & John knows how
many more bad & efficient back-
-and- chains about my feet. It
is too bad, for me, - I put myself

putting myself for today the joy,
but needs must. The fact is I
have really felt the need of some
high communion, - such as I have
when I see you & Sololine. For
must not laugh at me, - if the
moon were conscious of its light we
should not have the whole of it. But
I am exceedingly tired & depressed
with Fanny's illness, - although she
suffered but little, - but the presence
of impending death in those June
days was hard, - & there were
many attending circumstances

gates of heaven be wide open," &
they were her last words, - & though
she was fully conscious to the last
minute. Directly after that Jimmy
was taken ill, - & three weeks
after Jimmy died Mr. Hopkins
died. So you see where the path
has led this Summer.

Well, good by, my dear ones, - my
real strong angels, - I shall see
you any way in the Fall, - &
till then I always I am your
loving and own Hal.

but when I go groping, without a door
into the fourth dimension, I am
lost. I dare say this seems ab-
surd to you & A. A. - you are always
poised & oriented, - but I am no
better than a bit of paper on the
wind. I always used to tell
Dick that I was papilionaceous,
- of the butterfly tribe, touch it go,
- perhaps I may get as high as
a bird, as we go on.
I have thought so much of you &
my dear Ade, all Summer, -
hardly a day that I am not
with you more or less in fancy,

wondering what for on Fair, I had
you in. The thought of you is a
great seal to me.

I went on in May to Washington,
where they thought Abby Dodge was
dying, - Mrs. Blaine wrote to me to
persuade to come & finish the book
for which publishers & printers were
waiting that I had to go. She
had brought her book nearly to com-
-pletion & the materials were all
there, - & it seems cruel that
she was not to finish it. But
she lay apparently dying, & had
expressed the wish that I should do

it, & of course there was nothing
else to do, - although personally I
hated to do 'it, - not being prepared
for it, & unaccustomed &c. &c. I
came home to find Mrs. Blaine's
dying, - I had left her just a
little ill, - nothing that we thought
anything of. But the day after
I returned, she suddenly collapsed,
& died at sunrise. She knew she
was dying, - was full of a contented
quiet. "Don't try to call me
back," she said, when they were
trying to revive her, - "Let the